



**Winter 2014**



**Do you recognize this courthouse?**

**See answer on page 6.**

# Supreme Court Office of Public Information: Shining the Light on How Our Courts Work to Benefit Michigan Citizens

The Michigan Supreme Court has always been committed to educating the public about our justice system. Encouraging the public to attend oral arguments and public hearings, and encouraging journalists to cover those Court proceedings are important, but only represent part of that commitment.

In fact, the key mission of the Office of Public Information is communicating how the Michigan Supreme Court and SCAO are driving change in the judiciary to improve service to the public. Whether it's ramping up our social media reach, connecting communities around the state with the Court or arranging news media interviews for the justices, our department works to raise awareness of our accomplishments.

Led by John Nevin, MSC Communications Director, our team is charged with finding innovative ways of connecting with the public—directly and indirectly. A seasoned public relations expert and communications advisor whose background includes working for government agencies in Lansing, Detroit and Washington, D.C., John oversees media relations—editorial board visits with newspapers, media interviews and inquiries, writing guest columns—as well as marketing of MSC/SCAO resources and services to the courts and the public, and maintaining the quality of the “One Court of Justice” website content.



John Nevin

John came to the Court in February 2014, after more than 12 years of service as an advisor to the International Joint Commission, a body created by the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 to advise the U.S. and Canada regarding trans-boundary water and air issues. Prior to that, he served as chief speechwriter to Governor John Engler.

John earned an AB in economics from Harvard College, where he founded the Harvard International Review. He earned an MBA from the University of Chicago School of Business. In 2010, John received the prestigious Pinnacle Award from the Public Relations Society of America in recognition of his achievements.

John lives in Holt with his wife and their three children. Contact him at 517-373-0129 or [nevinj@courts.mi.gov](mailto:nevinj@courts.mi.gov).

(continued on page 2)

## Inside this Issue

Ingham Teen Court Program: Youth Gain New Respect for Law and Making Safe Choices	3
Veterans Treatment Court Forum Held November 10	4
My Coworker has Four Paws and Says 'Woof': The Use of Canine Advocacy Dogs in Court	5
The MiCOURT Experience is Underway	6
Ayuda Legal de Michigan Website –Free, Accurate Legal Information and Forms in Spanish	7
'Super Users' of the Judicial Data Warehouse	8
2014 Public Satisfaction Survey Update	9
Third-Circuit Court Shows Benefits of a Well-Run Jury System	10

## Public Information Office

(continued from page 1)

Coordinating our community outreach efforts around the state is Barbara Browne, Court Relations Program Coordinator. Barb came to the Public Information Office in 2006 after a lengthy career with the Bloomfield Hills Public School System, serving as communications director and overseeing the district's radio and public access TV stations. She organizes public outreach events such as Court Community Connections, which is a program that brings Supreme Court proceedings to communities around the state in an effort to connect local high school students and their attorney mentors firsthand with the work of the Court. Barb coordinates statewide Michigan Adoption Day efforts between the court system, Department of Human Services and the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange to raise awareness of adoption and foster care. In addition, Barb coordinates publicity and educational efforts for Constitution Day, Law Day, Juror Appreciation Month, and Law School for Journalists. Barb also works with the media, writes press releases and supports Justices when they are involved in various outreach events, among a wide range of other duties.



Barb Browne

Barb is married to Rick Browne who, in addition to being a senior research attorney for the Court of Appeals, enjoys photography and often captures Hall of Justice events.

Barb earned a BA in Communications from Oakland University. Through her previous job in the Bloomfield Hills schools, she organized a China exchange program, hosted numerous teachers from China, and took choir students to Prague to perform. Barb serves on the board of the International Visitors Council, and has traveled to Russia, Ukraine, France, Netherlands, Italy, and most recently to London.

Barb and Rick live in Brighton, and when they're not traveling, they enjoy spending time with their daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren as often as possible. Contact her at 517-373-0714 or [browneb@courts.mi.gov](mailto:browneb@courts.mi.gov).

Taking on the task of overseeing social media strategy and maintaining quality of external newsletters is Stacy Sellek, who joined the Supreme Court in August 2014 after spending more than 16 years at the Michigan State Medical Society, a professional association serving more than 15,000 licensed physicians around the state.



Stacy Sellek

At the medical society, Stacy served as senior manager in the Communications, Public Relations & Marketing department, and was responsible for editing a weekly e-newsletter and semi-monthly magazine, coordinating social media efforts, and managing website content.

Stacy's efforts here include ramping up the MSC social media presence by launching a new Facebook Page, expanding our reach on Twitter and Facebook to gain new followers and reach new audiences, and strategizing how to use social media to highlight the breadth of MSC/SCAO resources available to courts and the public. In addition, Stacy has taken on a review of news publications for the courts issued out of the Hall of Justice to ensure that the right information is reaching the right audiences in the most efficient way possible.

Stacy earned a BA in English from Michigan State University. She resides in Lansing with her two children, and their lovable rescue dog. Contact her at 517-373-0035 or [selleks@courts.mi.gov](mailto:selleks@courts.mi.gov). ■

### Connect with Us!

Follow MSC on Twitter: [@MISupremeCourt](https://twitter.com/MISupremeCourt)

Like MSC on Facebook: [facebook.com/misupremecourt](https://facebook.com/misupremecourt)



# Ingham Teen Court Program: Youth Gain New Respect for Law and Making Safe Choices

By Mike Botke, Ingham Teen Court Program Director

**“Would everyone please rise? Hear ye, hear ye, teen court is now in session.”** In teen court, the jury, clerk, and bailiff are high school teenagers who volunteer to serve and decide the final dispositions in juvenile petitions during teen court accountability hearings. First-time juvenile offenders (ages 11-16) residing in Ingham County – and with the support of their parent(s) -- agree to the process in which they must admit their guilt, prepare themselves to take responsibility for their actions, and agree to be held accountable by a jury of their peers. Oversight during the “accountability hearings” is provided by judges from Ingham County Family and District Courts and honorary judges recruited from Cooley Law School, law professors, and other local officials.



Sexton High School Student Peer Jury Chair reads the final disposition as Judge Janelle Lawless, Ingham County Presiding Family Division Judge, listens along with other students in the Gallery at Cooley Law Center Moot Courtroom

Completing program requirements and sanctions (a 90-120-day process) issued by a jury of their peers results in petition dismissal and no formal court record is incurred. The prosecuting attorney and juvenile court of Ingham County use certain criteria when authorizing petitions to be diverted to teen court. Examples of offenses include retail fraud, simple assault, possession of marijuana or alcohol, malicious destruction of property, unlawful entry, and larceny. To be eligible for teen court diversion, the juvenile respondent cannot have a previous criminal record. When entering the program, contributing risk factors are identified through an assessment and service links are established to help with mental health and substance abuse counseling (if warranted), school attendance, academic challenges, and other family needs. Victims of the offenses are contacted and are invited to participate directly and/or establish the need for restitution by law.

Since 2001, the program has grown: it annually serves close to 200 first-time juvenile offenders; approximately 500 high school student volunteers perform peer jury duty; and more than 7,000 teens have been served, to date. The teen volunteers are recruited from Eastern, Sexton, Everett, Williamston, Mason, Dansville, Stockbridge, and Okemos High Schools. Teachers like the service learning opportunity because it compliments their school curriculum in such subjects as economics, sociology, law, civics, and government classes. In addition, once the offenders have completed requirements, program officials invite them back to perform peer jury duty.

Teen court data demonstrates a low recidivism rate, and is creating a collective community effort to “Promote Law Education and Safe Choices in All Youth.” Parents, offenders, and volunteer peer jurors report a high satisfaction rate. Other benefits include: learning how courts function, gaining new law knowledge, desire to change personal decision-making, helping others through peer jury duty, and the benefit for first time offenders not to incur a formal record.

Interested in learning more? Contact me at [teencourt@cooley.edu](mailto:teencourt@cooley.edu) or 517-371-2823 or visit [www.childandfamily.org/services/juvenile-justice/teen-court.html](http://www.childandfamily.org/services/juvenile-justice/teen-court.html).

*Mike Botke, a long-time youth development worker, has headed the Lansing Teen Court since its inception in 2001. The DeWitt resident ran Johnson Childcare and Development Center in Albion before working for Boys and Girls Clubs in Greater Lansing for nearly 20 years. He is a passionate youth advocate.*





# Veterans Treatment Court Forum Held November 10

By Dana Graham, SCAO Management Analyst

On the eve of Veterans Day, the State Court Administrative Office - Trial Court Services Division hosted its third annual forum for Michigan's veterans treatment courts at the Hall of Justice in Lansing. Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. gave opening remarks, and the rest of the day was dedicated to open-dialogue workshops for the forum participants. The nearly 70 attendees at the forum included judges, administrators, veteran mentors, and probation officers from programs around the state. One of the most important concepts in any problem-solving court is a team approach, so the inclusion of so many court staff and community partners was a critical part of the forum's success.



The workshops at this year's forum covered several topics, including suicide prevention in the veteran community, partnerships between the Veterans Administration (VA) and court staff, and statutory and grant issues. Attendees were given the opportunity to discuss their programs

with other courts, share ideas, and ask questions. Sharing information and the networking that took place provided courts with significant opportunity for growth and improvement.

Chief Justice Young gave thanks and encouragement to the veterans treatment court teams in attendance at the forum.

"I am pleased to report that veterans treatment courts are growing and that growth reflects not just belief in the concept but successful outcomes. Since 2012, the number of veterans treatment courts in Michigan has more than tripled—from 6 to 20. That number is now tops in the nation," Young said.

Indeed, Michigan does have the most veterans treatment courts in the country, with two more potential programs in the works. In addition, three drug courts have special tracks for veterans. Veterans treatment courts combine drug court and mental health court principles to serve military veterans, promoting sobriety, recovery, and stability by offering alternatives to incarceration. Participants are ordered to intensive probation terms, including frequent drug and alcohol testing, appropriate treatment for substance abuse or mental health issues such as PTSD, and frequent meetings with the judge and probation officer. Progress in the program is met with small incentives to reward success, while setbacks are met with sanctions that can include short jail stays. Thus far, the veterans treatment courts enjoy a success rate of approximately 61 percent - meaning that of all participants who enter the program, 61 percent graduate successfully and are released from probation.

All problem-solving courts are based on a similar model. Veterans treatment courts are unique, however, in two ways: partnership with the VA and the role of veteran mentors. Most of the treatment for participants in a veterans treatment court is provided by the VA health system. Participants attend treatment at VA hospitals or outpatient clinics around the state, or use the VA's Telehealth system. The use of mentors is also a critical component of veterans treatment court: each participant is paired with a mentor – generally from the same branch and era of service – who serves as a friend and support throughout the program. The mentors volunteer their time and energy to help ensure the participant succeeds in veterans treatment court. Many successful graduates of these programs report that the relationship with their mentor was the number one reason for success.

Anyone interested in starting a veterans treatment court, or learning more about them, should contact me at [graham@courts.mi.gov](mailto:graham@courts.mi.gov) or 517-373-2218. More information about veterans treatment courts is also available at <http://courts.mi.gov/administration/admin/op/problem-solving-courts/pages/veterans-treatment-court.aspx>.

*Dana Graham is a management analyst in Trial Court Services. She administers the Michigan Drug Court Grant Program and the Michigan Veterans Treatment Court Grant Program. Prior to beginning work with problem-solving courts, Dana was a law clerk with the Friend of the Court Bureau and worked in communications for the Michigan Department of Information Technology.*



# My Coworker has Four Paws and Says 'Woof': The Use of Canine Advocacy Dogs in Court



*By Katherine Ambrose, Court Administrator/Attorney Magistrate, 10th District Court (Calhoun County)*

When you walk a dog through the hallways of a courthouse, you will see the facial expressions of those that are focused on their anger, intimidation, or confusion change to a relaxed state when they bend down to tousle the fur of the dog. Should we concern ourselves with the feelings or attitudes of our courthouse patrons? I'm not sure how I would have answered that question before I met Holli.

Three months ago, our prosecutor's office partnered with the Canine Advocacy Program to receive an advocacy dog for criminal victims. Originally, Holli was intended to act as a comfort and relaxing point of focus for children who had to testify in court. Prosecutor's office staff are trained to be Holli's handlers and the prosecutor welcomed Holli as a family member after work hours. The courts did not play a role in obtaining Holli, but when she arrived, employees throughout the building were excited to see her sniffing around and wagging her tail in wonder. In an instant, every department wanted Holli as a coworker.

Not too long after she arrived, prosecutor's office staff began noticing that Holli would shy away from younger children, growl quietly at them, or even bark. While the prosecutor's office was contacting the Canine Advocacy Program for insight and advice into Holli's behavior, they offered her services to both our veterans treatment court and sobriety court. I was unsure whether either of the programs' judges would approve of a dog being in the courtroom, but both eagerly welcomed Holli. She was instantly a hit with participants. You could see whatever tension was in the courtroom melt away when Holli entered with her sweet face.

Holli's original trainer responded to the concerns of the prosecutor's office by watching Holli interact and react to the public and employees, especially children. Ultimately, the handler said that Holli should not be used as an advocate with children. I tagged along with prosecutor's office staff and the handler as he took Holli through the courthouse hallways. I was so impressed with the responses Holli received from the public that I began thinking of other possible ways district court could use Holli outside of veterans treatment court and sobriety court. So now my answer to the earlier question is, why not? If the tool exists, why not use it in any situation where it might be helpful? Maybe Holli's presence would deescalate that possible outburst during arraignments or a preliminary examination. District court will continue to use Holli's presence in veterans treatment and sobriety courts, but we will also see what other roles Holli can assist in throughout District Court.

Some courts will be intrigued by this idea and some will say it is not for them. If you are curious about what an advocacy dog could offer your court, here are some of the things that you need to consider:



Holli

- 🐾 Who will keep the dog outside of work hours?
- 🐾 Who will be trained to handle the dog during work hours? Once Holli began attending our veterans treatment and sobriety courts, probation staff were trained to be handlers. A staff member who has dogs or is familiar with dogs is preferable.
- 🐾 Do you have an area outside of your courthouse for a dog to take potty breaks?
- 🐾 Where will the dog stay during work hours when not being used? Holli shares an office with a prosecutor's office staff member when she is not in court.

Your budget will have to include veterinarian bills and the advocacy dog does need to be insured. Our county insures Holli the same as we insure our sheriff's department K-9 deputies. The county is insured through Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority and did not have to obtain a separate liability insurance rider. However, the county is required to keep documentation on any previous owners, health screenings, and shots. In addition, a prescreening of behavior and temperament was required to ensure that the dog is well-behaved around strangers and other animals.

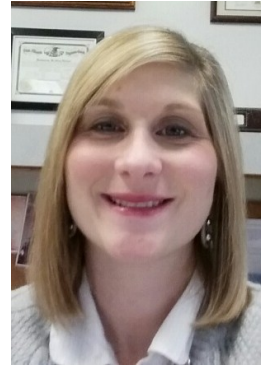
(continued on page 6)

## Canine Advocacy Dog

(continued from page 5)

A canine advocacy dog is a nontraditional workplace commitment, but one with possibly more benefits than we are aware of currently. Author Dean Koontz wrote, “[p]etting, scratching, and cuddling a dog could be as soothing to the mind and heart as deep meditation and almost as good for the soul as prayer.” ■

*Katherine Ambrose is the 10th District Court Administrator/Attorney Magistrate. Prior to her current role, Ms. Ambrose was the Deputy District Court Administrator and was also a Calhoun County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney.*



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### Questions? Comments? Suggestions?

Contact the Connections team at [connections@courts.mi.gov](mailto:connections@courts.mi.gov) or 517-373-7496

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Answer to courthouse location from page 1: Wayne County (Frank Murphy Hall of Justice)

# The MiCOURT Experience is Underway

By Tina Beach, JIS Business Development Coordinator



MiCOURT is the new 'one court' Windows-based case-management system. It is currently being used in Berrien County (civil only), Court of Claims, and most recently, the 29th Circuit Court in Clinton County.

The MiCOURT Experience is a set of tools made especially for each project. When it is time to migrate data, the court will be prepared. We have created a monthly newsletter to keep court users informed on the rollout process, training opportunities, and helpful resources to prepare them for implementation.

Our 2015 courts are getting ready to ramp up, starting with the 56th Circuit Court in Eaton County, followed by the 35th Circuit Court-Shiawassee, 5th Circuit Court-Barry, 36th Circuit Court-Van Buren, 31st Circuit Court-St. Clair, and 44th Circuit Court-Livingston. Courts have also begun signing up to start their experience in 2016 and beyond.

There are plenty of slots yet to fill; we will be following up with JIS courts, encouraging them to choose a spot to begin the migration process. Once the last JIS court is migrated, we will retire all of the current JIS case management systems.

To keep up to date, follow the link for all the [MiCOURT News](#). Or contact me at [BeachT@courts.mi.gov](mailto:BeachT@courts.mi.gov) or 517-373-2234. ■

*As the business development coordinator for JIS, Tina Beach says she has had the amazing opportunity to talk to courts across the state and introduce them to the new MiCOURT case management system. Before taking on this new role in February 2014, Tina worked as a technical service representative for JIS for six years. Originally, she worked as a circuit court clerk in Shiawassee County for nine years.*



Happy Holidays from  
all of us at SCAO.





# Ayuda Legal de Michigan Website

## Free, Accurate Legal Information and Forms in Spanish

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*By Angela Tripp, Project Manager, Michigan Legal Help Program*

*This is the third in a series of Connections articles about the Michigan Legal Help Program.*

Since MichiganLegalHelp.org launched on August 17, 2012, more than 760,000 visitors have accessed free, accurate legal information and forms to help them handle simple legal matters on their own. Now, much of this same information is available in Spanish at AyudaLegaldeMichigan.org. This Spanish-language version of Michigan Legal Help (MLH) was launched in the fall of 2014.

The *Ayuda Legal de Michigan* website was created to make legal information easier to understand for Spanish-speakers, and to show them how to navigate the court system properly and efficiently.

When *Ayuda Legal* was launched, specific content was prioritized for translation. Currently, there is information about family law matters, protection from abuse, consumer law problems, and individual rights.

Family law matters include divorce, custody, and child support. The protection-from-abuse tools contain information about domestic relationship and other types of personal protection orders. Consumer legal issues covered are suits regarding debts, small claims, installment-payment plans, and garnishment. Individual rights materials include asking the court for an interpreter or to waive filing fees. Two of our videos have been translated, and three more are in progress right now. These priorities were developed after polling legal advocates who regularly work with Spanish-speaking litigants and by studying the usage statistics on MLH in its first year.

All new content added to the website will be translated immediately for *Ayuda Legal*, and we are working to translate the rest of the content that has been on Michigan Legal Help for six months or more. Whenever edits and updates are made to existing content, the same changes are made to the Spanish-language version. LiveHelp is also available in Spanish, to help those website visitors who need more assistance navigating the site and finding the resources there.

Outreach about *Ayuda Legal* began in September, with the issuance of a press release and other announcements of the launch; in-person outreach via attendance at relevant events in different areas of the state; and distribution of Spanish language flyers and business cards to courts, legal services offices, and community organizations in counties with sizeable Spanish-speaking populations.

We are working steadily to get more of our resources translated into Spanish. While there is a great deal of legal information already available on *Ayuda Legal*, we want to make more of our interactive interviews available in Spanish to help people prepare the forms they need for court. While all court forms have to be filed in English, the interviews can be done in Spanish and users will get a second copy of their documents in Spanish as well. These Spanish-language documents are primarily the forms that have been translated by SCAO and are available on the *One Court of Justice* website.

Visit [www.AyudaLegaldeMichigan.org](http://www.AyudaLegaldeMichigan.org) to view the website and learn more about its tools for civil legal self-help in Michigan. Flyers and cards for *Ayuda* are available to anyone through the PR materials link in the footer of the website. Please help us spread the word about this new resource! ■

**AYUDA LEGAL DE MICHIGAN**  
Ayudando a los residentes de Michigan a resolver sus problemas legales



# 'Super Users' of the Judicial Data Warehouse

By Daniel Bauer, SCAO Management Analyst

"You are omniscient as ever, Dumbledore."

"Oh, no, merely friendly with the local barmen."

— J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*

Sometimes, the key to doing good work is knowing where to find information. Increasingly across Michigan, staff in circuit, district, and probate courts turn to the Judicial Data Warehouse (JDW) to find the information they need to administer their caseload.

The JDW has both standard queries that court personnel can use at a moment's notice, and the ability to generate ad hoc queries to answer specific questions.

## Standard Queries



Claudia Wilson

Claudia Wilson in the Collections Unit for the 3rd Circuit Court (Wayne County) uses the SR-300 report. This report assists the court with collecting balances due on criminal cases. She runs the report for a specific date range when the defendant has a change in status – like sentenced to probation or released from prison.

"The information supplied in the SR-300 report includes all of the defendant's cases with an outstanding balance due to our court. This report is also used as a mail merge document to mail out the initial Delinquency Notice, which begins the enforcement process."

In the 7th Circuit Court (Genesee County), deputy court administrator Janet Patsy has also used JDW to increase collection revenue.

"We used JDW to determine the offense codes that had re-occurring payments to see if there was an offense type where the defendant may be more likely to make a payment."

Tanya Todd in the 61st District Court (Grand Rapids) uses the death match query in JDW often. Like many other courts, D61 maintains a list of outstanding receivables and warrants. The JDW includes records of those owing money to the court or subject to arrest on a bench warrant. Todd can run a query of that report against the deaths reported to the Michigan Department of Community Health. After confirming a death, she can close out uncollectable debt or clear names off of the list of outstanding warrants.

## Ad hoc Queries

As beneficial as the standard queries are, users can create their own queries based on their own needs. Following a recent change on the 61st District Court bench, Todd developed an ad hoc query of all cases in the JDW where a newly appointed judge was listed as an attorney for one of the litigants.

"This query encompassed the entire state and will allow us to cross-reference our database so we can flag those cases where reassignment is necessary," Todd writes.

Patsy also used the JDW to see how many of the domestic relations filings are by *in pro per* litigants. This confirmed what the court knew was going on, but showed the actual data: litigants without attorneys made up more than half of the domestic relations filings involving children, and more than two-thirds all DO filings. The court used this information to fine-tune document workflow.



Tanya Todd

"During the referee hearings, e-forms were developed to be completed by the referees and flow to the case management software for easy import. Some law students also now serve as interns in the referee office, screening incoming documents and addressing any defects prior to the judgments of divorce," Patsy writes.

(continued on page 10)

# JDW Super Users

(continued from page 9)

## Using the JDW

Timeliness in the responses is particularly important. Sometimes, the queries help answer a judge's pressing question, like, "how many of these types of cases do we get in a year?" Or, "how do we compare with other courts or statewide?" Court administrators typically want to provide an answer to such judicial questions quickly.

Is the JDW the perfect source for all information? Like any database, it can never be better than the quality of the data put into it. Regularly, information from most every court's case management system is uploaded to the JDW. (Some courts' data has yet to be uploaded to the JDW. For a current list of courts with excluded data, see this [map](#).) So, the information court staff enter locally is regularly uploaded to the JDW, just waiting for someone to use it.

If you want to be a "Super User" of the JDW, like those highlighted in this article, you can request access to the JDW [here](#). ■

*The Judicial Data Warehouse (JDW) is a repository of case and person information compiled from the information system of nearly every Michigan trial court. This article focusing on "Super Users of the JDW" is the first in a series of articles highlighting the administrative benefits to using this tool. Future articles will focus on the child welfare services "data snapshot," nonjudicial users of the JDW, and support from JIS and Optum (access, training, and ad hoc query requests).*

## 2014 Public Satisfaction Survey

SCAO appreciates the time and effort expended by courts in this year's public satisfaction survey. Staff has scanned and verified more than 21,000 surveys, with several thousand more still to be processed. We expect to send your results by the end of January.



# Third Circuit Court Shows Benefits of a Well-Run Jury System

By Mary Kay Wimsatt, Jury Services Director

## JURY SYSTEM'S HIGHLIGHTS

The Third Circuit Court Administration has spent the last few years focusing on four key objectives of a well-run jury system:

1. Securing the number of prospective jurors from which to elect juries;
2. Ensuring the jury pool reflects a fair cross-section of the community;
3. Managing court resources, including jurors' time, efficiently; and
4. Treating jurors with dignity and respect.



The following offers some of the highlights of what the court has done over the past two years to meet these objectives.

## AUTOMATION UPGRADE AND CONVERSION TO A ONE-STEP PROCESS

Effective October 22, 2013, the Third Judicial Court (court) upgraded its jury automation system to the Jury Systems, Incorporated (JSI) *Jury + Next Generation (Jury + Next Gen)*. As part of the upgrade, the court also converted its juror summoning and qualification process from a two-step to a one-step procedure. To ensure that this conversion proceeded smoothly and the court achieves the maximum benefit from the new automation, the court contracted with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to:

- Conduct a thorough review of existing policies, procedures, and business practices in jury operations;
- Make recommendations with respect to the number of qualified jury summons to mail under a one-step system to ensure an adequate number of jurors to meet the demands of the court;
- Estimate the fiscal impact of existing policies, procedures, and business practices; and
- Make recommendations on areas for improvement.

Two results of the automation and the conversion to the one-step summoning process have been:

- The one-step method has proved to be very user friendly for the juror. As one of the options offered, the juror can complete the questionnaire online, which jurors agree is very convenient and also allows for a reduction in the quantity of mail returned to the jury services department. The jurors are also able to give themselves one postponement if the original summons date does not fit into their schedule.
- The one-step method has allowed the court to mail 17,855 fewer questionnaires/summons forms for the fiscal year 2013/2014 when compared to fiscal year 2012/2013. As a result of sending out fewer pieces of mail, the court realized a printing and postage savings of \$73,242 for fiscal year 2013/2014.

## JUROR UTILIZATION

Juror utilization is a key performance measure in jury operations that documents how effectively the court uses the jurors that it has summoned and qualified for jury service. In an effort to follow the NCSC recommendation of 10 percent or less jurors not "used" in each division, Chief Judge Robert J. Colombo, Jr., issued the following docket directives in March and May 2014 to improve juror utilization.

- Commencing jury trials in the civil division on Thursdays, thus reducing the number of questionnaires/summons mailed by approximately 275 pieces per week per fiscal year.

(continued on page 12)

# Jury System

(continued from page 11)

- Jury Utilization Policy for Scheduling Jurors in the Criminal, Civil, and Juvenile Divisions mandates e-mail communication between the courtroom clerks and the jury services staff each day before 3:00 p.m. on the day prior to the trial date to confirm the attorneys of record are ready to proceed with the trial. This communication has shown a reduction in the number of day-of-trial cancellations due to late plea agreements, settlements, and continuances.

## FTA JURORS SHOW CAUSE HEARINGS

- Despite the attempts of the court to make jury service as convenient as possible, the court finds many jurors are just not compliant with the summons and the order to appear for service. In October 2014, Chief Judge Colombo, Jr. held a show cause hearing for a sampling of jurors who failed to appear for service more than twice in the past nine months. The court hosted a press conference announcing the show cause of noncompliant jurors and the media continued to provide coverage of the date of the hearings. Below is a recap of the hearing:

Show Cause Letters Mailed	239
Number of Detroit Residents on Original Mailing List	129 (54%)
Show Cause Jurors Excused Prior to October 30, 2014	37
Show Cause Jurors Expected on October 30, 2014	203
Appearances	126 (62%)
No Shows	77

The jurors were given the opportunity to choose a new date of service Monday through Thursday during the week of November 17, 2014. A juror who fails to appear on this next service date will have a bench warrant issued in their name and be entered into L.E.I.N.

- The outgoing envelope, which contains the questionnaire/summons mailed to jurors, added the following verbiage to the front of the envelope "OFFICIAL NOTICE REGARDING SELECTION FOR JURY DUTY. FAILURE TO RESPOND MAY RESULT IN PENALTIES PROVIDED BY LAW." This change was implemented with the expectation that the recipients will give more attention to the content of the envelope than they might have given in the past and realize the importance of not only responding to the questionnaire but also to reporting on the summons date.

## REVISION TO THE JURY PLAN

Modifications to the court's jury plan were completed in November 2014. The modifications were made to reflect the one-step process and to ensure the jury plan conforms to Michigan law.

## JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM UPDATE

- Dignity and respect toward jurors are best conveyed through words and actions, but providing a safe, clean environment while in service also allows the court to show the reporting jurors that their attendance is appreciated. The jury assembly room in the civil division court location, Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, was completely renovated within the past couple of months to include fresh paint and new carpet, chairs, and window coverings. The criminal division court location, Frank Murphy Hall of Justice, will begin renovations in December 2014.

The court will continue to work toward the goals to achieve NCSC recommendation of 10 percent or fewer not "used" jurors and continue to review the quantity of questionnaires/summons mailed to the quantity of jurors required for trials with the objective of reducing the number of forms mailed. The court is committed to ensuring that jury service remains a priority.

*Mary Kay Wimsatt has served as the 3rd Circuit Court's Jury Services Director for nearly 11 years. Prior to joining the court, Ms. Wimsatt's degree in education was put to use not only as an elementary school teacher, but also as a business trainer for the Canadian Tire Corporation. She also worked for three years as a personal organizer.*